



ELMER C. BARTELS
Commissioner

Debra S. Kamen
Director

Tel (617) 727-8732
Fax (617) 727-1354

UMASS/AMHERST
312066 0282 4218 9

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Human Services
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Statewide Head Injury Program

DOCUMENTS COLLECTION
MASSACHUSETTS
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
AMHERST 01003

02 1996

SHIP, A DECADE OF SERVICE

The Statewide Head Injury Program (SHIP) is celebrating tens years of service and support to individuals with head injury and their families from across the state.

SHIP is focusing on providing community-based services which will assist SHIP consumers to function as independently as possible. Family assistance is an example of such a service. Through this service, clinicians have provided individual families with strategies to use in living with their family member at home that will increase his/her independence and decrease problematic behaviors.

In response to an identified need, SHIP has developed therapy groups for both consumers and family members. These groups are offered periodically, and focus on specific issues related to individual issues and family adjustment.

The renewed emphasis on providing local services that make a difference in people's daily lives includes the recognition of the need for structured recreation and socialization opportunities. SHIP funds seven (7) recreation programs across the state. Within each program, consumers play an active role in the selection and planning of individual and group recreation activities. In addition to regular recreation activities, each program works to increase each participant's ability to network and access recreational options in their own community.

Substance abuse and sexuality are two areas in which SHIP has been at the forefront of education, research, and policy and curriculum development.

SHIP sponsors trainings about head injury and substance abuse for rehabilitation professionals and specialists in the field of chemical dependence. We maintain a successful affiliation with three residential substance abuse programs to provide greater access to treatment for persons with head injury. SHIP also provides consultation to similar programs throughout the state to enhance their understanding of how brain injury can have an impact on substance abuse treatment. A clinician, specializing in head injury and sexuality, is providing on-going training to the staff and participants of all SHIP-sponsored programs.

Consultation and training are available to assist other agencies, programs and schools to work as effectively as possible with persons with head injury. Clinicians cover general topics as well as develop strategies and techniques for specific individuals. SHIP can also arrange consultation regarding various options and methods for accessing housing.

SHIP sponsors a neuropharmacology clinic, which is based in Boston but serves the entire state. Efforts are underway to develop this capacity in other parts of the state as well.

To assist individuals with head injury in becoming independent, contributing citizens of the Commonwealth, SHIP continues to collaborate with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Office of Employment Services (OES) to provide a number of supported employment programs (SEP). These programs assist individuals in finding competitive employment in the community. Through a job coach, SEP provides on the job training and support necessary to assist the individual in maintaining their employment. SEP staff are then available to provide long term supports as needed. SEP also educates each consumer about how their public benefits may be affected by returning to work and how to utilize Social Security work incentives.

Future directions for SHIP depend, of course, on resources. The SHIP Advisory Council has recommended a high priority be placed on community-based residential services, including supported living options. At the same time, a larger portion of SHIP's annual expenditures has been used to purchase individualized support services. This complements our overall goal

of assisting individuals to function as independently as possible at home, work, and in their communities.

We are pleased to share information about SHIP's expanded service options and welcome your assistance in identifying additional areas where services for head injury survivors may be needed. We look toward the next decade with full knowledge that increasing consumer needs, and uncertain funding, will continue to challenge our ability to creatively meet the needs of SHIP consumers and their families. We invite your continued support as we strive to meet this challenge.

